

# Safety On The Road

## Intersections Need Quick Thinking

Tightly-packed traffic moving in four directions, impatient drivers, inattentive pedestrians — no wonder intersections are the scene of nearly a third of traffic accidents.

**Intersection accidents can be prevented. Here are some ways:**

- Drive defensively. Be prepared for other drivers and pedestrians to make mistakes. You can't depend on others to follow traffic regulations or even to be courteous.
- The right-of-way as indicated by traffic signs or signals does not protect you from collisions. You don't really have the right-of-way until another driver or pedestrian gives it to you.
- Get the big picture as you approach and drive through an intersection. Keep your eyes moving. Look at the traffic situation well ahead of your vehicle so you can anticipate problems such as sudden stops.
- Be aware of the traffic light cycles ahead of you. If a light has been green for awhile, it is going to change to amber soon.
- Keep checking traffic on the cross street for problems such as vehicles failing to slow down for the light or the stop sign. Be alert for jaywalkers.
- Glance frequently at your rear view and side view mirrors to monitor the traffic beside you and behind you in case you have to stop or swerve.
- Never pass at an intersection. Look out for vehicles attempting to pass you on either side.
- When approaching a red or amber light, slow down gradually and come to a complete stop.
- When stopping for a red light, leave a car length between you and the vehicle in front of you. If you are at the front of the line, leave some space between you and the crosswalk. This will give you room to take evasive action if you see a vehicle behind you failing to stop. It will also provide some protection from another vehicle cutting the corner.
- Wait before starting out again, until you are sure the cross traffic is stopping for the red light. Never jump a green light – you may get hit by someone running a red light on the cross street.
- Enter and proceed through an intersection cautiously. Keep your vehicle under control, ready for a sudden stop, quick acceleration or other emergency maneuver.
- Four-way stops require co-operation and courtesy to prevent collisions and keep traffic moving smoothly. Making eye contact with other drivers can improve communication.
- Uncontrolled intersections commonly found in residential areas require caution and co-operation. Speeding accounts for many accidents at these intersections, when the driver does not leave himself enough time to stop for cross traffic. As you approach an uncontrolled intersection, slow down. Be aware of obstructions to your view such as parked cars or shrubbery. Never take it for granted the other vehicle is going to stop for you.

*Things change quickly at an intersection. Stay alert and be ready to respond to new circumstances! A defensive driving refresher course is an excellent idea for all professional drivers.*

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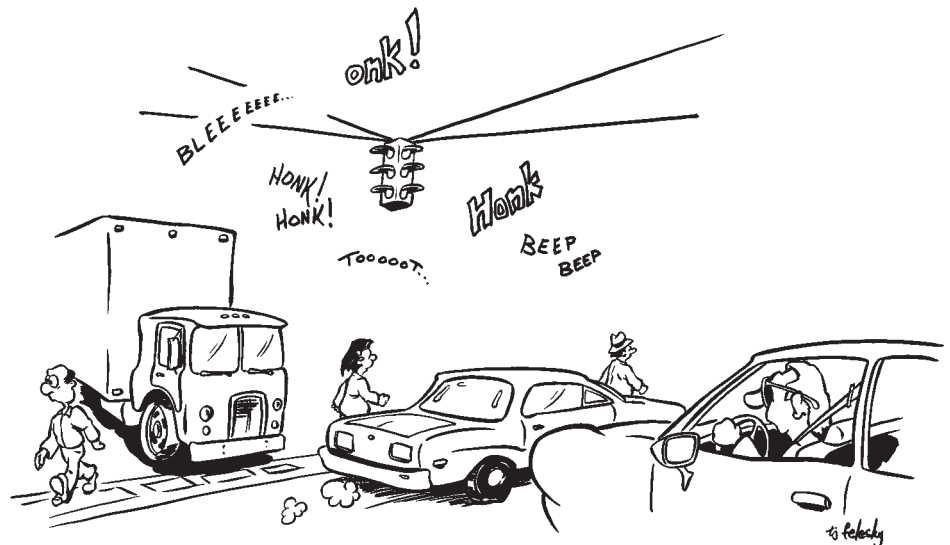
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